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THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DEATH,

OF MISTRIS KATHERIN BRETTERGH, late wife of Maſter *William Brettergh*, of Bretterghoult, in the Countie of Lancaſter Gentleman; *who departed this world the laſt of May.*

With the manner of a bitter conflict ſhe had with *Satan, and bleſſed conqueſt by Chriſt, before her death,* to glorie of God, and comfort of *all beholders.*

MICHA. 7.8.

Reioyce not againſt me, O mine enemie: though I fall, I ſhall riſe againe: And when I ſit in darkeneſſe, the Lord ſhall be a light vnto me.

PSALM. 37.37.

Marke the vpright man, and behold the iuſt: for the end of that man is peace.

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The holy life and Christian death, of *Mistris Katherin Brettergh.*

THis Gentlewoman was borne in Cheshire, the daughter of Iohn Bruen of Bruenstapleford Esquire, well descended, and of an ancient house. Her education before her marriage was such, as became the profession of the Gospell, in godlines and puritie of life and religion, and wel beséemed the house where she was brought vp. The Scriptures shee knew from a child, and by reading thereof, gained such knowledge, that shée was able readilie to apply them when occasion was offered, as we may see at the [illegible] her death, and that so fitly, and effectually, that shée [illegible] her dailie meditation. For the things [illegible] moderate, and sober, and by her Christian life [illegible] death, she might teach many Gentlewomen, how vaine the pleasures and fashions of this world are, and how farre vnable to bring that peace to a distressed heart, that the embracing of true Religion can. Stapleford.

She vsed not to gad abroad with wandring Dinah, to dancing Genes. 34.1.
grénes, markets, or publike assemblies: but rather with Hannah did shuse to tread vpon the dust of the Sanctuarie, and walke in the waies of Sion: yea, with Dauid, rather to bee a doore-keeper in the house of God, then to haue societie with the wicked, or to dwell in the tents and tabernacles of the vngodly. The Sabbath day was alwaies deere and welcome to her, what time shee would not be without the word preached, though many times she went farre for it. Her delight was still to consecrate it glorious to the Lord. And as it is said of Iosiah, his heart melted when he heard the law; so may it be said of her, her heart was so tender and full of compassion, that oftentimes shee was seene to beare Sermons, reade, pray, and meditate with teares. 1. Sam. 1.9.12. Psalm. 84.10. 2. King. 22.19.

She made conscience of all sinne; yea, of the least sin, such as

worldlings count no sinne: she neuer vsed to sweare oath great nor small, nor yet to abuse her tongue with vaine or vnseemely speeches; no not so much as a iesting lie or immodest word; neither durst she name the name of God, or take his titles in her mouth, without great reuerence. In priuate speech where shee might speake with profit, shee did it so well, that her speeches might haue been deliuered by a stronger vessell then her selfe: her words being so well seasoned, and proceeding from such a sanctified heart, did alwaies minister grace to the hearers.

Psalm.16.3. To reade, to pray, to sing, to meditate, was her daily exercise; and her chiefest delight was in the holy society of the Saints vpon earth (which I say not for any cause, but onely to shew the fountaine from whence her godlie end flowed, and that the world may see some there bee which chuse rather to bee ioyned Heb.11.25. with the people of God, then to enioy the pleasures of sinne for a season; and these I doubt not haue chosen the better part.) Finally, the precepts of the Lord were precious vnto her, for from her childhood shee feared God and [illegible] knowledge and sanctification did ioyne in [illegible] fects whereof did appeare in her life, and was seene at be. to the glorie of God, and comfort of all beholders.

She was not like the simple Popish women of our daies, 2.Tim.3.6.7. which are euer learning, and neuer able to come to the knowledge of the truth; but rather like the noble men and women of Berea, Act.17.11.12. which receiued the word of God with readinesse, and were able to discerne of Pauls and Silas preaching. But why doe I speake of Popish women, whose vnderstandings are darker then the darknes of Egypt? Let vs come and examine many other which seeme to detest Poperie, and aske them a reason of their faith; they can tell you a tale of their ruffes, [illegible] their pride, and their vanities, but for Religion, it is the least thing they regard, or seeke to know: which I speake not so much to solace my selfe in the sins and simplicitie of others, as earnestly desiring al Gentlewomen, that either knew this holy Saint of God, or hereafter shall heare of her, in steed of your glasses at home, wherein you pricke and prune, and pin your selues, to looke into this glasse before your eyes, that so her life, and death, may bee an example for you to follow.

When

When shée was about twentie yéeres old, (by the consent of her selfe, and her friends) she was married to a young Lancashire Gentleman, Master William Brettergh of Bretterghoult néere Liuerpole: one that likewise embraced Religion sincerelie, and for the same indured many grieuances at the hands of Papists.

Two yéeres and more she liued after shée was married, and had issue onelie one Daughter: during which time, this couple liued together in such mutuall ioy and comfort, as well beséemed the children of God, which make profession of his truth. And although this Gentlewoman came from the habitations of Abraham to dwell in Sodome, amidst the tents of Kedar, that is to say, among inhumane bands of brutish Papists, induring many temporall grieuances from them; yet her knowledge, patience, mild inclination, and constancie for the truth was such, as that her husband was further builded vp in Religion by her meanes, and his face daily more and more hardened against the diuell, and all his plaguie agents; the Popish Recusants, Church-papists, [illegible] arnall Protestants, which swarmed together [illegible] hornets in [illegible] parts.

Anna Brettergh.

Psal. 120. 5.

It [illegible] not vnknowne to Lancashire, what horses and cattell of her husbands were killed vpon his grounds in the night, most barbarouslie at two seuerall times by Seminarie Priests (no question) and Recusants that lurked thereabouts. And what a losse and hindrance it was vnto him, being all the stocke hée had on his grounds to any purpose. This fell out not long after shée was married to him; yet this was so farre from dismaying her, or working such passions in her, as are common to her sex, that she rather reioyced, then sorrowed; turning it into matter of praising God, and submitting her selfe to his good prouidence. Oft she would haue said, It is good that such things be; but woe be to them that doe them. It is good in God, thereby to chasten his children, and preuent some sinne, which he saw vs like to fall into. It is good in respect of Gods Church, that the weake may be confirmed in the truth, and that Papistrie may bée disgraced, when the world shall sée such wickednesse flow from it. It is good in God, that so the wicked may be without excuse at the day of iudgement, when their conscience shall tell them, that howsoeuer God suffers them to doe such villanie for some iust cause

* Iohn Wrightinton Esquire.
Richard Orme.
Raph Heaton, &c. and many moe.

knowne to himselfe; yet they commit it onely of malice and reuenge. Oftentimes also in these vexations, she would haue said; the mercies of God are infinite, who doth not onely by his word, but also by his iustice, make vs fit for his kingdome. Little doe our enemies know, what good by these things they doe vnto vs, and what wracke they bring to their owne kingdome, while they set forth the wickednesse thereof. Many times shee would pray that God would forgiue them, which had done them this hurt, and send them repentance: and she would call vpon her husband,
Matth.5.44. that he would doe the like, and blesse them that cursed him. And
Iohn 1.5. for feare lest her husband should faile in that point through infirmitie and weakenesse, as it is said of Iob, who offered sacrifice for his sonnes, lest peraduenture they should sinne, and blaspheme God in their hearts: so she neuer failed, but daily prayed vnto the Lord to sanctifie her husbands thoughts, and direct his heart aright, onelie to seeke Gods glorie, without either desire of reuenge, or satisfying his owne affections. So humble was her spirit, so carefull to auoid and preuent [illegible] both
Gen.33.3.4. and others; and so mild of nature, that [illegible]cob with
1.Sam.24. nesse softened the malicious heart of Esau his brother: [illegible] Dauid
17.18. by his kindnesse in the caue, changed the fr[illegible]ie of Saul, into weeping, and confessing that Dauid was more righteous then he: so she by her meekenesse, humilitie, and vnspotted carriage in the world, forced some of the aduersaries to Religion, to speake well of her.

For her life, she was well reported of all that knew her. Pitifull and bountifull was shee to the poore, and slacked no opportunitie to doe good wherein shee could; but constantly held her course, and kept her times of praying, reading, and meditating, (wherein she had plentifull gifts) and continuallie vsed the same at such times as were fitting for her state, sex, and calling. At the exercises of Religion, as prayer and instruction in her familie, she would not be wanting: besides priuate prayer, and meditation which she omitted not but vsed daily, both in her chamber, as also abroad secretlie and solitarilie in the orchard, garden,
Genes.24.63. or fields, as Isaacks manner was. In reading the Scriptures she vsed euermore to tasse her selfe, eight chapters a day at the least, and for the time which she saw euill or idlie spent, without doing

some

some good, she used to call the time of tentation. Many times also she would reade some godly writer, or expositor of Scripture, or in the booke of Martyrs; and was seene to weepe most bitterly, when either she had read of that which touched her affections neere, or of the cruell martyrdome, which the deare children of God were put vnto, by the cruell and wicked tyrants of former daies.

For Poperie, she saw it so grosse and foolish, that shee would not once name it, except it were to argue against it, but never for it: so zealous was she of Gods glorie, and loued the truth so intirely, that she would not once open her mouth to plead for Baal. Exod. 23. 13. Psalm. 16. 4. Ephes. 5. 3. Iudg. 6. 31. 32. Eccl. 4. 25. 28.

Sin aboue all things was hatefull vnto her, for there at shee would haue grieued, as well when she had seene it in others, as in her selfe. One or two examples I cannot omit, wherein shee bewraied a worthie spirit, sanctified by the spirit of God, and prepared for all the assaults of Satan. On a time, as her husband and she were riding toward the Church, he was angry with his [illegible] husband, (quoth she) I feare your heart is not right toward God, that can be thus angrie for a trifle: And weeping she said further, you must pray against this your affection, and alwaies be sure your anger be of God, for else how dare you appeare this day before his Minister? and offer vp your prayers in the publike congregation of the Saints of God? Another time, a tenant of her husbands, being behind with his rent, shee desired him to beare yet with him a quarter of a yeere, which hee did: and when the man brought his money, with teares shee said to her husband: I feare you doe not well to take it of him, though it bee your right, for I doubt he is not well able to pay it, and then you oppresse the poore. So great a compassion had she of other mens wants, that all things being duly considered, and rightly weighed, me thinks I may say of her, as Paul said of Timothie, I know none like minded. Phil. 2. 20.

Thus after she was married, she continued in the things shee had learned, and held her profession with such sinceritie, that the common enemies to our religion (the very Papists) had nothing to say against her, but confessed her life was vnreprooueable. And as for the godly that knew her, they alwaies acknowledged that modestie, and vertuous carriage in her, ioyned with knowledge and

and practise of all the duties of religion, that they had iust cause to report of her, as of a sound and faithfull professor of the Gospell.

Two yeares, and somewhat more she lived with her husband, till about Whitsontide, it pleased God to send her that sickenes whereof on Whitsonday she died.

Her sicknesse tooke her in the manner of a hot burning Ague, which made her according to the nature of such diseases, now and then to talke somewhat idl[illegible] and through the tempters subtiltie, which abused the infirmitie of her body to that end, as hée oftentimes vseth to doe in many, from idle words, to descend into a heauie conflict, with the infirmitie of her owne spirit; from the which, yet the Lord presently and wonderfully deliuered her, giuing so ioyfull an issue to the tentation, that she might well vse the words of the Prophet, as afterwards she did: For a moment,

Esa. 54. 8. May 23. O Lord, thou diddest hide thy face from me, for a little season, but with euerlasting mercie thou haddest compassion on me. On Saturday seuen-night before Whitsunday, what time she sickned, she began to feele some little infirmitie and [illegible]kenes of [illegible]ney then she had wont to shew, but she soone ouercame it. Mon-

May 25. day night it increased vpon her, and the assault of the enemie began to be sharpe, and so continued till the next day at afternoone; what time God deliuered her, and sent her peace and comfort of conscience, and so increased the same in her continually til she died. The manner of her affliction was this.

M. William Brettergh. M. William Fox M. Edward Alpinwall. M. Iohn Brettergh. Mistris Maud Brettergh. Mistris Scholastica Fox. William Woodward. Elizabeth Challoner.

First, the seueritie of Gods iustice and the greatnes of her sins began to come into her mind, which much afflicted her, and she would often speake of it. Then she accused her selfe of pride, that she had delighted too much in her selfe, and her beautie. Afterwards she thought shee had no faith, but was full of hypocrisie, and had not imbraced Religion so earnestlie, nor glorified God so worthilie (especially with her tongue, which oft shee repeated) nor loued him so sincerely as shee ought to haue done. Sometime she would cast her Bible from her, and say: It was indeed the booke of life, but she had read the same vnprofitablie, and therefore feared it was become to her the booke of death. Sometimes she would say her sinnes had made her a praie to Satan, a spectacle to the world, a disgrace to religion, and a shame to her husband, kinred, and all true Christians: and here shee would

weepe

wepe bitterly. Sometime the originall corruption wherein she was borne, troubled her, and the sinnes of her parents, and the common parents of all, the eaters of the forbidden fruit: as if that had made her unworthie of God, and were then laid to her charge. Many times shee accused her selfe of impatience, bewailing the want of feeling Gods spirit, and making doubt of her election, and such like infirmities. She wished that she had neuer been borne, or that she had been made any other creature, rather then a woman. She cried out oftentimes, Woe, woe, woe, &c. a weake, a wofull, a wretched, a forsaken woman, and such like pitifull complaints against her selfe, with teares continually trickling from her eies. Shee complained of grieuous thirst, such as all the water in the sea could not quench (and yet when drinke was giuen her, sometimes refused it, sometimes toke a very little of it:) sweate burst out vpon her exceedingly, and sometimes her body burned extreamely. So it seemed the sorrowes of death hemmed her in, and the griefes of hell laid hold vpon her. Sometimes she was very dull in prayer, and once when she should haue said, Lead vs not into tentation, she made a stop, saying, I may not pray; I may not pray (being interrupted, as she said, by Satan) and so shewed much discomfort: howbeit she was not left till she could both pray, and make confession of her faith with speciall application to her selfe. Besides these fierie darts of Satan, shee was once or twice troubled with vaine speeches, as of her child, the killing of her husbands cattell, that she thought she saw a fire by her, &c. But euery one saw that these things proceeded of weakenesse, emptinesse of her head, and want of sleepe, which her disease would not affoord her.

These fits though they were for the time grieuous to her selfe, and discomfortable to her friends: yet were they neither long nor continual, but in the very middest of them, would she oftentimes giue testimonie of her faith, striuing and fighting against her tentations. Many times when the standers by iudged her afflictions at the sharpest, would she call vpon God, lifting vp her eies and hands to heauen, and desire him to giue her strength against her tentations. Many times with a chearefull countenance she would desire those that were by not to faint, nor giue her ouer, but constantly to pray, and helpe her against the tempter. Once

William Fox. in the middest of her tentation, being demanded by Master William Foxe: whether she did beleeue the promises of God or no? and whether she could pray? she answered: O that I could, I would Marke 9.24. willingly, but he will not let me. Lord I beleeue, helpe my vnbelieſe: which she pronounced with a ſtill low voice. And when he replied, that if she had a deſire to pray and beleeue, she did pray and beleeue, and that so effectuallie, that hell gates should not ouercome her, according to that of the Apoſtle, God accepteth it 2. Cor. 8.12. according to that a man hath, not according to that a man hath not: she was much comforted thereby.

William Brettergh. Once after a great conflict with Satan, she said: Satan reaſon not with me, I am but a weake woman, if thou haue any thing to say, say it to my Christ; he is my aduocate, my ſtrength, and my redeemer, and he ſhall pleade for me. Sometimes when she was aſflicted with the accuſation of her ſins, and want of feeling Gods mercy, shee would with many a pitifull ſob and much weeping, Iohn Brettergh. pray to the Lord Ieſus Chriſt to help and comfort her, a poore woefull, diſtreſſed woman, and requeſt others to pray for her. And Edward Aſpinwall. when she was moued to make confeſſion of her faith, she would do it oftentimes, saying the Apoſtles Creed, and concluding the ſame with words of application to her ſelfe: I beleeue the remiſſion of [my] ſins, the reſurrection of [my] body, and eternall life [to me] Amen. And hauing done, she would pray God to confirme her in that faith, euer concluding with the Lords Prayer, as deuoutly and reuerently as any that were preſent. A Chriſtian friend, who by his daily attendance on her, diſcharged the duty of William Woodward. a faithfull Chriſtian, ſtanding by told her, that no tentation had befallen her, but that which appertained to the child of God, and that God is faithfull and true, and had promiſed to giue an iſſue with the tentation: whereat she expreſſed great comfort.

Maſter Edward Aſpinwal, a faithfull profeſſor of the truth, and a true Iſraelite, was much with her in the time of her ſicknes, and miniſtred much heauenly inſtruction vnto her, and comforted her at all times with apt places of Scripture, meeting with her tentations: and so put the ſword of the ſpirit into her hand. He propounded to her the moſt plentifull comforts of God vnto his Eſa. 40.1.2.28. 29.30.31. Church, in the 40.41.42. and 43. Chapters of Iſaiah, vttered in ſuch ſpeeches and phrases, as might moſt fitlie anſwere her diſ-

comforts.

comforts. Also he directed her to consider the Passion and Prayer of our Saviour Christ, for all his, John 17. Matth. 26. Luk. 22. 23. But specially did he often inculcate that sweete invitation of our Saviour: Come vnto me all you that trauell and be heauie laden, I will ease you. But the difficultie she had sometimes to apply these generals vnto her own soule in particular, made the case more ful of anguish to her self, and fearefull and lamentable to the standers by: Albeit she acknowledged Gods Maiestly, mercy, faithfulnesse, and truth; yet still complained she of her owne weaknes, and vnworthines, and could hardly appropriate each thing to her selfe.

Esa. 41. 8. 9. 10. 13. 14. 17. 18. Isa. 42. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 13. 14. 15. 16. Esa. 43. 1. 2. 5. 25. Matth. 11. 28.

To help her some what herein (for properly otherwise, it is the peculiar work of the holy spirit of God, to perswade the hart and soule of her particular interest in these general promises) she was told that the Almighty who was mercifull, as she had proued, and faithfull as she confessed; intended all these mercies to as many as he did call and make promise to. And that hee called her she must néds confesse, both because that then she not only her selfe read, but heard others reade those blessed words of God vnto her: and also for that in former times, she had bin touched with the loue of God, and that his truth: and had well profited in the detestation of sinne, and imitation of her Saviour in a holy life. And for the prose thereof, she was wished to remember in former times her Baptisme, her frequenting of Sermons, & often receiuing the most comfortable repast of the holy Communion, her daily, and almost continual exercise of reading, meditating, and praying, &c. Also he assured her, that neither ỹ present agony she was in, nor the spéches then in that distresse, tending to the signification of despaire, extorted from her, were any iust causes, why either she, or any that heard her, should iudge fearefullie of her, because all might see the fault was not in her will, as appeares by her prayers, confessions, plaints, sighs, teares, and grones to God for mercy, and full assurance in the blood of Christ; but in her iudgement, not able at that time to discerne the waies of the Almightie: And therein (he told her) she was made cõformable not only to many the holy Saints of God, Iob, Ieremy, Danid, & others more, but also to her head, our Lord and Saviour Christ Iesus: of whom we reade, that some haue cursed the day of their birth, and called for their end, and darkenes to couer them: They haue been as men without

Iob 3. 1. &c. Ier. 20. 14. Iob 6. 4. 8. 9. Iob 16. 9. Lament. 3. &c.

hope, and swallowed vp in despaire: They haue cried how the
Psal.6.3. wrath of God hath torne them, and the terrors of the Almighty haue fought against them: They haue had no peace in their soules, nor comfort in their consciences, their prayers haue bin shut from God, their sinnes haue been terrible vnto them, crying that their
Psal 38.4.&c. iniquities had gone ouer their heads, and were a burthen too heauie
Psalm 71.7. for them to beare: And they haue thought themselues spectacles
Psalm.77.1. 7.&c. of shame and reproch, and as monsters vnto men: They were
Psalm.51.5. grieued for the sinnes of their parents, and complained that they
Psalm.102. were desolate, forsaken, and most miserable and wretched in the
3.&c. world; yet for all this were they still the deare children of God,
Rom.7.24. as you are this day. (May (saith hee) I pray you consider, what torments God inflicted vpon his deare Son vpon the Crosse: did
Matth.27.46. he not crie out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
Matth.26.38. He complained, that his soule was heauie vnto death; yet was hee
Heb.5.7. heard in that which he feared, and God deliuered him. After this,
May 26. he read vnto her the 22. Psalme, wherein Dauid complained, partly of his owne, but principally of the most bitter anguish which our Sauiour Christ endured, and suffered in body and soule, putting her in mind, that her case was not so bad as Dauids, nor much vnlike our Sauiours, who endured all that, and more for her; and therefore she had no cause to feare, seeing Christ had obtained victorie, and would vndoubtedly bee with her, deliuer her, and eternally glorifie her with himselfe for euermore; and so continually hee propounded to her such comfortable places of Scripture, as might meet with her infirmities. This greatly refreshed her, and gaue her occasion many times to call vpon God, for encrease of grace, and deliuerance from her grieuous tentations: the which God of his accustomed goodnes vouchsafed, on Tuesday, about three a clocke in the afternoone, what time shee felt her selfe in very good measure deliuered from all her former feares and afflictions. But on Saturday next after, which was the day before her death, she was wholly released, and filled with such inward comfort, that it greatly affected vs that saw it.

This is the summe of that tentation which shee had, wherein what can any man see that might giue iust occasion to report our religion comfortles, or the Gentlewoman died despairing? This we are sure of, that to be without tentation is the greatest tentation:

tion: as also, that nothing befell her, which hath not befallen the holiest of the children of God. And she that considered her owne corruption (which how great it is in the best of Gods Saints, I need not say) and bethought her selfe of the punishment due thereto, if God in iustice should reward her, no maruel if she brake out sometime into heauy complaints. I make no question it was the worke of God in her, to suffer Satan to accuse her, and afflict her for her sinnes, that so shee might the better see them, and consider the hainousnes of them, and before her departure repent her of them, and betake her wholly to Christ for the sauing of her soule. And if it pleased God thus to make her possesse her sins before she died, let those which neuer yet knew the waight of their sinnes, be wise in time, and remember, that he shall neuer haue his sinne forgiuen, which first or last doth not vndergoe a holy despaire for it, and acknowledge nothing to remaine in himselfe, but matter of iudgement and condemnation: and comfort and eternall life to flow alone from Iesus Christ.

And as for those which haue learned to scoffe at the terrors of Gods children, and to censure such, as are at sometimes cast downe with feeling the anger of God against sinne, let them consider the blessed issue that God gaue to the troubles of this Gentlewoman, and let them acknowledge his worke in her. And if they will not doe this, but proceed to traduce the dead, then let them call to mind, those of the Popish crue, and persons of greater note among them, then this Gentlewoman was, which haue died most fearefully indeed. Cardinall Sadelot, Iacobus Latomus the Diuinitie Reader at Louaine, Hofmester the Frier, Guarlacus, Bomelius, Crescentius the Cardinall, Stephen Gardiner Bishop of Winchester, and diuers the bloodie persecutors in Queene Maries time, and some of the Popes themselues, as namely, * Pope Sixtus Quintus of late yeeres: all which died most fearefullie and miserablie, and shewed manifest signes at their death, that their popish superstition was the condemnation of their soules. And if they will iudge of my religion by my death, let them acknowledge their religion is the doctrine of desperation, and that the truth and faith which was able to fill the heart and tongue of this blessed Gentlewoman at her death, with such heauenly comforts, is the doctrine of Christ, reuealed from heauen

Fox. Acts and Mon. pag. 1904. 61. pag. 1908.

* Francis the Monke, one of the ten popish persons conuerted in France, Anno Dom. 1601. See Hasen Mill. historia Iesuitica, who sets downe certaine examples of the Iesuites to this purpose.

uen, that wee might liue and die in it.

From Tuesday, till Whitsun-euen, her comfort still increased, and tentations vanished away. She would then very cheerefully ioyne with the company in prayer, and singing Psalmes, as occasion offered, and performed all such duties as were meet for her in that estate. One day, her brother M. John Bruen of Bruen-stapleford came from his house in Cheshire to visit her, and after some kind salutation passed betweene them, he said vnto her: Sister, be not dismaied at your troubles, but remember what the Apostle saith, that iudgement must begin at the house of God. To whom she answered, as one that was also very ready in the Scriptures, with the very next words following: True it is, and if it begin at vs, and the righteous shall scarce be saued, where shal the sinners and vngodly appeare? After that she prayed with him, and sung a Psalme with him, as one that receiued great comfort by him, and acknowledged in him, a hart set to seek the things belonging to the kingdom of Christ. During this time, in the night with such as waked with her, she would pray and rehearse for her comfort many texts of Scripture, and namely the 8. to the Romanes, many times concluding and closing vp that shee read, or repeated, with prayer, and most comfortable vses and applications thereof to her selfe, with shew of such ioy and comfort, that the hearers reioyced at it. When * shee receiued any meat, shee prayed God not onely to sanctifie those creatures for her bodilie sustenance, but also to fill her soule with the waters of life, often repeating that of the Reuelation: To him that thirsteth, will I giue of the waters of life freelie.

One time she toke her Bible in her hand, and ioyfully kissing it, and looking vp toward heauen, she said that of the Psalme: O Lord, it is good for me that I haue bin afflicted, that I may learne thy statures: The law of thy mouth is better to me then thousands of gold and siluer.

Another time she called her husband to her and said: O husband, beware of Papistrie, keepe your selfe holy before the Lord: Yeeld not to the abominations of the wicked, lest they reioyce, and so you dishonour God, and destroy your owne soule. Againe she said, Let my little child be brought vp among the children of God, and in the true feare and knowledge of his Maiestie; so shall

I

John Bruen Esquire.
William Brettergh.
William Fox.
Iohn Brettergh.
William Woodward.
Iohn Holland.
Maud Brettergh.
Scholastica Fox.
1. Pet. 4. 17. 18.
Iohn Holland.
William Brettergh.
William Woodward.

* Richard Orme, Iohn Holland, William Brettergh, William Woodward.
William Fox.
Reuel. 21. 6.
William Brettergh.
William Fox.
Psal. 119. 71. 72.
William Brettergh.

Maud Brettergh.

I meet her in heauen, whom now I must leaue behind me on earth.

Again, sometime shée would pray with a low voice to her selfe, and that saying of Paul, We haue not receiued the spirit of bondage to feare any more, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we crie, Abba father, was much in her mouth: and the last words Abba father, she would double oftentimes ouer. She would sing to her selfe the last verse of the 13. Psalme. William Brettergh. Rom. 8. 15. William Fox.

I will giue thankes vnto the Lord, and praises to him sing:
Because he hath heard my request, and granted my wishing.

Finally, in these and such like exercises and meditations, did shée spend the whole time of her sickenes, after the Lord had once enlarged her heart, from the tentations of Satan.

But vpon Saturday about eleuen of the clocke in the morning, the Lord disclosed himselfe in mercy to her more plentifully then euer before; and as I may say, he dealt familiarly with his handmaid: for from that time to her very death, which ensued the next day, the feeling of Satans tentations seemed quite to be banished from her; so that she made no shew of them, her thoughts were not occupied with the world, husband, child, or any thing else to our thinking: neither was her sickenes troublesome to her, as before it had been: but as one raised from death to life, or ravished in spirit, so seemed shée to vs that stood by: her countenance ioyfull, her tongue flowing with the praises of God, and her voice as most heauenly musicke, and melodie of peace, sounding praise, and honour, and glorie to God in a wonderfull manner, as followeth. May 30.

About eleuen of the clocke shée began to tremble and quake a little, and withall shée asked her husband if hée would helpe her with prayer to God against the tempter, saying, Will ye neither pray with mée, nor bring some godlie man that may put holy things into my mind, whereby I may bée able to resist Satan? Hauing thus said, shee vttered these words: O Lord God of my saluation, helpe my weaknesse, pleade thou my cause, O God of truth, for in thee do I trust. After this, they prayed together, and he answered Amen to euery petition. Then after this she required him to reade some part of the Scripture: whereupon hee read vnto her the 8. to the Romanes, the 91. Psalme, and the 17. of Iohn, the which as he read, and came to the 4. verse, I haue finished: William Brettergh. Maud Brettergh. Elizabeth Challoner.

shed the worke which thou gauest me to do, and now glorifie me: **she desired him to pause a while, & then said,** Blessed be thy name, O blessed Saviour, perfect the worke, I humblie beseech thee, which thou hast begun in me. **Then as he read the 9. verse,** I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast giuen me, for they are thine: **she interrupted him againe saying,** O Lord Iesu, dost thou pray for me? O blessed and sweet Saviour, how wonderfull! how wonderfull! how wonderfull are thy mercies! Reade on, said she, the blessedst reading that euer I heard, the comfort whereof doth sweeten my soule. **Then reading verse the 22.** And the glorie which thou gauest mee, I haue giuen them, that they may bee one as we are one: **with maruellous ioy she vttered the words of**
Psal.107.8.9. Dauid **many times ouer,** I confesse before the Lord his louing kindnes, and his wonderful works before the sonnes of men: for he hath satisfied my soule, and filled my hungry soule with goodnes. **When he came to the 24. verse,** Father, I will that they which thou hast giuen me, be with me, euen where I am, that they may behold my glorie, which thou hast giuen me; **Stay, said she, and let me meditate on the goodnes of the Lord, for this is the sweetest saying that euer came to my soule: for now I perceiue and feele the countenance of Christ my redeemer is turned towards me, and the bright shining beames of his mercie is spread ouer me:** Oh happie am I that euer I was borne, to see this blessed day! **Praise, praise, O praise the Lord for his mercies; for hee**
Esa.17.1. **hath brought me out of darkenes, and the shadow of death: hee**
Psalm.103.1. **hath deliuered my soule from the snare of the hunter, and hath**
2.3.4. **taken me out of the den of Lions, euen from the iawes of** Leuiathan, that piercing and crooked serpent, **and hath set me in a place of rest, and sweete refreshing:** Oh praise the Lord O my soule, all that is within me praise his holy name: my soule praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits, which forgiueth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thine infirmities: which hath redeemed thy life from the graue, and crowneth thee with mercie and compassion. **This she often repeated: And then againe remembring the 21. and 22. verses of the 17. of Iohn, shee said:** O my sweete Saviour, shall I be one with thee, as thou art one with thy Father? And wilt thou glorifie mee with that glorie which thou haddest with the father before the world was? And dost thou so loue mee

(which

(which am but dust and ashes) to make me partaker of glorie with Christ? What am I poore wretch, that thou art so mindfull of me? Oh how wonderfull! how wonderfull! how wonderfull is thy loue! Oh thy loue is vnspeakeable, that hast dealt so gratiouslie with me! Oh I feele thy mercies, and oh that my tongue and heart were able to sound forth thy praises as I ought, and as I willingly would doe! Oh that you all would helpe me to praise the holie one of Israel, the God of all consolations! **And thus for the space of fiue houres together at the least, shee continued praising and lauding the Lord, with such a gladsome and heauenly countenance, testifying such inward ioy, from a comfortable feeling of the mercies of God in her soule, and vsing such sweete sentences, and sugred phrases of perfect and holy eloquence, as the truth thereof, if it could haue been taken, were admirable, continuing so many houres together; some part whereof was this:**

Pſal.144.3. Pſal.8.4.

Oh my Lord, oh my God, blessed bee thy name for euermore, which hast shewed me the path of life. Thou didst O Lord hide thy face from me for a little season, but with euerlasting mercie, thou hast had compassion on me: And now blessed Lord thy comfortable presence is come, yea Lord, thou hast had respect vnto thy handmaid, and art come with fulnes of ioy, and abundance of consolations: O blessed be thy name O Lord my God. **Then shee repeated part of the 16. Psalme, saying:** The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, wherefore my heart is glad, and my tongue reioyceth: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: In thy presence is fulnes of ioy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for euermore: Oh that I could therefore praise the Lord, as hee is worthie to be praised! I will sing to the Lord, I will sing to the praise of the God of Israel: come, come, (**saith she**) and helpe me, O helpe me to praise the Lord. **And with that she began to sing the third Psalme, and continued to the end of the Psalme, as perfectly, and with as sweete a voice, as euer she had before in her health; and concluded with the 49. verse of the 106. Psalme:**

Eſa.54.8. Pſal.16.59.11. Iudges 5.3.

The Lord the God of Israel, be blest for euermore:
Let all the people say Amen, praise ye the Lord therefore.

And after this she said, O praise the Lord, for hee hath filled me with ioy and gladnes of heart, and brought me from the gates of hell, and of death: **repeating that of the 16. Psalme,** My line is fallen

Pſal.16.6.

fallen vnto me in a pleasant place: yea I haue a faire heritage, for the Lord is the portion of mine inheritance: The place where I now am, is sweete and pleasant: Oh how pleasant is the sweete
Exod.30.23. perfume of the place where I lie! It is sweeter then Aarons composed perfume of principall spices: how comfortable is the sweet-
Reuel.8.4. nes I feele! It is like that odour that proceeds from the golden censor, that delights my soule. The taste is precious: doe you not feele it? Oh so sweete it is! yea sweeter then myrrhe, the hony, or the hony combe. Let me therefore sing againe, and againe vnto my Lord, and my God. **Then she did sing the nineteenth Psalme, beginning at the seuenth verse,** How perfect is the law of God, &c. **and so on to the end of the same. And after that spirituall reioycing in singing of Psalmes, she then prayed vnto God faithfully, and praised the Lord againe ioyfully. And being still full of these, and such like heauenly consolations, she did sing againe most heartily, vnto the praise of God the 136. Psalme.** Praise yee the Lord, for hee is good, for his mercie endureth for euer: &c. **In which Psalme,** for his mercie endureth for euer, **is 26. times repeated. A Christian friend comming in at the same time, which**
Master William Fox. **was about fiue of the clocke in the euening, maruelling to see her exceeding ioyes, and heauenly harmonie, wherein she continued with such words and phrases, that were so spirituall, prayed for the continuance of the same vnto the end: whereupon shee then**
William Bretergh. **burst out, relating further of her ioyes, saying:** Oh the ioyes! the
William Fox. William Woodward. ioyes! the ioyes! that I feele in my soule! oh they be wonderfull! they bee wonderfull! they bee wonderfull! **And after that, shee prayed for increase of faith, and that God would strengthen her against tentations, with continuall crauing of remission of sins, euer meditating of heauenly matters, as by her sudden and often breaking out into heauenly speeches, and praises, did appeare:**
William Fox. **for the same euening she lying still and silent for a while,** one **prayed her to remember the Lord Iesus, and that shee would in her heart pray for constancie in her ioyfull course; whereupon**
Psal.27.1.3. **shee answered with a delightsome and cheerefull countenance and comfortable voyce:** Oh (said she) so I doe, for the Lord is my light, and my saluation, whom then shall I feare? Though an host pitch against me, yet my heart shall not bee afraid, for the Lord
Deut.4.31. hath said, I will not leaue thee, nor forsake thee. Indeed, I should

vtterly

vtterly haue fainted, but that I beleeued to see the goodnesse of the Lord in the land of the liuing. And now my heart is readie, my heart is readie and prepared, yea, it panteth after thee O God: as the Hart brayeth after the riuers of water, so panteth my soule after thee O God: my soule thirsteth for God, euen for the liuing God. When Lord, when shall I come and appeare before thy presence? &c. **Saying then further**; Lord, sith it hath pleased thee to prepare my heart, whether to life or death, thy will bee done, dispose of me to thine owne glorie: I am thine Lord, work thy blessed pleasure and good will vpon me. **And after this she fell into a short slumber, and awaking said, as the spouse said vnto Christ in the Canticles**: Oh come kisse me with the kisse of thy mouth, for thy loue is better then wine. Oh how sweete the kisses of my Sauiour bee? **Then one said vnto her, alluding to that place of** S. Iohn, Reuel. 3. 8. **and praying that the Lord would anoint her with the eye-salue of his grace, that shee might see and behold his glorie. To whom she answered**, Mine eyes are opened, mine eyes are opened, though for a while they were closed vp and shut; yet now I thanke my God, mine eyes are opened, and I doe feele and see the euerliuing mercies of my Christ: **saying then further, as it is in the 27. Psalme**: Thou saidst, seeke my face: my heart answered to thee, O Lord I will seek thy face. O hide not therfore thy face from me, nor cast thy seruant away in displeasure, thou hast been my succour, leaue me not, nor forsake me, O God of my saluation. **And being willed to commit her soule into the hands of Christ, she said**: O Lord Iesus, thou hast redeemed me, pleade thou my cause, for into thy hands alone doe I commit my spirit, O thou God of truth. **And then feeling more ioy to abound**, one **praising God with her for his mercies shewed toward her, shee further said**: I giue thee thanks O father, Lord of heauen & earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise, and men of vnderstanding, and hast opened them vnto me thy poore handmaid, which am but dust and ashes. O how merciful and maruellous gratious art thou vnto me! yea Lord, I feele thy mercy, & I am assured of thy loue, & so certaine am I therof, as thou art the God of truth, euen so sure do I know my selfe to be thine, O Lord my God; and this my soule knoweth right wel, and this my soule knoweth right wel: **which speech of her assurance, she oftē repeated. Presently af-**

Psal. 27. 13. Psal. 108. 1. Psal. 42. 1. 2. William Brettergh. Cant. 1. 1. William Fox, Psal. 27. 8. 9. William Brettergh. Psal. 31. 5. William Woodward. Matth. 11. 25. William Fox, Psal. 139. 10.

William Bret-tergh. Iob 19.25. 26.27.

ter this, sitting vp in her chaire, she sung the fourth Psalme; and then being laid downe againe in her bed, thee confidently spake these words: I am sure that my redeemer liueth, and that I shall see him at the last day, whom I shall see, and mine eye shal behold: and though after my skin, wormes destroy this bodie, yet shall I see God in my flesh with these eyes, and none other.

Master William Harrison. William Bret-tergh. William Fox. Iohn Bret-tergh. William Woodward.

Then came in to see her toward euening, Master William Harrison the Preacher, praising God for her continuance, in that her ioyfull and most happie course: and perswading her to an holie perseuerance in the same, she thanked him, and desired him to reioyce in Christ with her, and to praise God for his mercies to her, and said: Oh Master Harrison, my soule hath been compassed about with terrors of death, feare within, & feare without, the sorrowes of hell were vpon me, knots and knorres were vpon my soule, (which twice or thrice she repeated) and a roring wildernes of woe was within me; but blessed, blessed, blessed, be the Lord my God, who hath not left me comfortlesse, but like a good

Psal.23.2.3.

shepheard, hath hee brought mee into a place of rest, euen to the sweete running waters of life, that flow out of the sanctuarie of God, and hee hath led me into the greene pastures, where I am fed, and exceedingly comforted: yea, he hath restored my soule, and lead me into the plaine and easie paths of righteousnes. The way that now I goe in, is a sweet and easie way, strowed with flo-

. Psal.147.14.

wers, and as a fine sandie way; yea, it is more easie and soft then the sand, for I goe and tread vpon wheate, euen vpon the finest flower of wheat: Oh blessed be the Lord; Oh blessed be the Lord, that hath thus comforted mee, and hath brought mee now to a place, more sweete vnto me then the Garden of Eden. Oh the ioy! the ioy, the delightsome ioy that I feele! Oh how wonderfull, how wonderfull, how wonderfull is this ioy! O praise the Lord for his mercies, and for this ioy which my soule feeleth full well: praise his name for euermore. And these praises of God, she

William Bret-tergh. William Woodward.

sounded forth, like Dauids harmonie, being indued with Dauids spirit, to the praise of the eternall and mercifull God, continuing al night in such like prayers and praises to God, except some smal time, that shee was silent and quiet. Master Harrison prayed twice with her that euening, as also in the morning (being Whitsunday.) After he had prayed once with her, going then toward

ward his publike charge, she sent for him to pray once more with her before hee went, which hee did; to the ioy and gladnesse of heart, both of her, and al that were present: and so he tooke leaue of her, and departed.

Another faithfull man or two came presently in that morning, and diuers others well affected, who were with her at the time of her death, and often prayed with her that forenoone, she still abounding in spiritual comforts and consolations: somtimes as one awaking out of sleepe, she would say, the Lord was her keeper, and deliuerer. Againe, one saying vnto her, the Lord blesse you: Yea (saith she) and the Lord Iesus blesse vs all. And so seeming to sleepe a little while, and awaking againe she said: Lord I trust in thee, haue mercy vpon me, giue me strēgth to praise thee: defend and preserue me in the houre of tentation, and lay no more vpon me, then thou wilt inable me to beare. Afterwards being asked, if she would haue thē ioyne in prayer together again with her: O yes (said she) for Christs sake I desire it: saying thus to her selfe: Heare O Lord, and haue mercie vpon me: Lord bee thou my helper. Thou hast loosed my sacke, and girded me with gladnesse: therfore will I praise thee, O Lord my God: I will giue thankes to thee for euermore. With that, all that were present did ioyne in prayer with her, and in conclusion vsing the Lords prayer, which she said with them, to thine is the kingdome; her strength then being gone, her tongue failed her, and so shee lay silent for a while, euery one iudging her then to bee neere death, her strength and speech failing her: yet after a while, lifting vp her eyes with a sweete countenance and still voyce, said: My warrefare is accomplished, and my iniquities are pardoned. Lord whom haue I in heauen but thee? and I haue none in earth but thee: my flesh faileth, and my heart also, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for euer. He that preserueth Iacob, and defendeth his Israel, hee is my God, and will guide me vnto death: guide me O Lord my God, and suffer me not to faint, but keepe my soule in safetie. And with that she presently fell asleepe in the Lord, passing away in peace, without any motion of bodie at all; and so yeelded vp the Ghost, a sweete Sabbaths sacrifice about foure of the clocke in the afternoone, of Whitsunday, being the last of May, 1601.

M. Edward Aspinwall. William Fox. William Brettergh. Iohn Brettergh. William Woodward. Mistris Maud Brettergh. Mistris Scholastica Fox. Elizabeth Challoner, and diuers moe.

Psal. 30. 10. 11. 12.

Esa. 40. 2. Psal. 73. 25. 26.

This was the death of that vertuous Gentlewoman, happtlie dying in the Lord, and reaping the benefit of a holie profession. Wherein wee cannot but acknowledge and reuerence the mercie of God, who in our greatest infirmity makes his grace to shine most clérely. A sure testimonie of the truth of our profession, seruing to incourage vs therein, and to moue vs to a godlie life. It must nédes bee a diuine Religion, and a true, comming from God, that thus can fill the heart and mouth of a weake woman, at the time of death, with such admirable comfort. And a wretched conceite, and meere Antichristian is that religion, which so hateth and persecuteth this faith, which is thus able to leade the true-hearted professors thereof, with such vnspeakeable peace vnto their graues.

Her Funerall was accomplished at Childwall Church on Wednesday following, being the third of Iune. And now for conclusion, seeing this blessed Gentlewoman is taken from among vs, and receiued into the holy habitations of the heauenly Ierusalem, there to remaine in ioy, glorie, and blessednes for euermore; let vs lament for our losse, but reioice for her gaine; and let vs pray, that in heart we could as willingly wish to be with her, as she is now vnwilling to be with vs.

Salomon saith, The memorie of the iust shall be blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot. Prou. 10. 7.

FINIS.